



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

NEWS

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Governor Quinn Proposes Raising Illinois' Dropout Age to 18

Answers President Obama's Education Call to Action

CHICAGO – January 27, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today announced his support for raising the minimum attendance age of students in Illinois schools to age 18. As part of his ongoing commitment to reform education in Illinois, Governor Quinn will propose legislation to the General Assembly during the annual State of the State address next week to achieve this goal this year. By answering President Barack Obama's State of the Union call for states to encourage students to complete their high school education by age 18, the governor is taking another step to improve education in Illinois.

"Every child in Illinois deserves a quality education that will serve them throughout their lives," Governor Quinn said. "The best way to ensure that our children have the chance to achieve and succeed is to make sure they stay in school long enough to earn their diploma."

With a current minimum dropout age of 17, Illinois is one of 29 states that allow students to drop out of school before they turn 18. As President Obama said in his address, when students are not allowed to walk away from school, they are more likely to walk across the stage to receive their high school degree. Research shows that increased educational achievement is not only positively linked to higher lifetime earning potential and stronger economies, but also to lower crime rates.

Under Governor Quinn's proposal, Illinois will take another step towards the goal of increasing the state high school graduation rate. As a result, more students will be better prepared for college or to join the workforce, which will help create jobs and strengthen Illinois' economy for the future.

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